

REMARKS

Applicant is in receipt of the Office Action mailed April 22, 2008. Claim 9 has been cancelled. Claims 1, 10, 11, and 29-31 have been amended. New claims 32-42 have been added. Claims 1-8 and 10-42 are pending in the case. Reconsideration of the present case is earnestly requested in light of the following remarks.

Allowed Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the allowed subject matter, and while Applicant believes the claims are written are allowable, to expedite prosecution Applicant has decided to accept the allowance.

Applicant has accordingly amended the independent claims to include the subject matter of claim 9, now canceled. Moreover, new independent claims 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, and 38 have been added as indicated above based on the allowed subject matter of claims 13, 14, 17, 18, 22, and 24, respectively, and new dependent claims 34 and 39-42 have been added based on the allowed subject matter of allowed dependent claims 15 and 25-28, respectively. Applicant thus submits that the claims as currently amended are allowable for at least this reason.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 2, 4-8, 12, 16, and 29-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,839,583 to Takano et al. (“Takano”).

Applicant has amended the claims per the allowed subject matter, thus rendering the section 102 rejection of these claims moot. Applicant respectfully requests removal of the section 102 rejection of these claims.

Claims 3, 19, and 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takano in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,567,762 to Bourde et al. (“Bourde”).

Claims 20 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takano in view of Bourde, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,275,235 to Molinari et al. (“Molinari”).

Applicant has amended the claims per the allowed subject matter, thus rendering the section 103 rejection of these claims moot. Applicant respectfully requests removal of the section 103 rejection of these claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicant submits the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is requested.

If any extensions of time (under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136) are necessary to prevent the above-referenced application(s) from becoming abandoned, Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extensions. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required or credit any overpayment to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert & Goetzel P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1505/5150-82600/JCH.

Also filed herewith are the following items:

☐ Other:

Respectfully submitted,

/Jeffrey C. Hood/

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